

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

081033Z Dec 00

2000HANOI02665 - UNCLASSIFIED

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ACTION EAP-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	DODE-00	SRPP-00
	DS-00	FBIE-00	UTED-00	VC-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	VCE-00
	AC-01	NSAE-00	ACE-00	IRM-00	USIE-00	IIP-00	DSCC-00
	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/001W				

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FM AMEMBASSY HANOI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1467
INFO AMCONSUL HO CHI MINH CITY
ASEAN COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS HANOI 002665

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/BCLTV, EAP/RSP, INR/EAP/SEA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [VM](#) [ASEAN](#)

SUBJECT: ENERGIZING ASEAN IN THE ARF

REF: A) STATE 227617; B) STATE 222865

1. THIS IS AN ACTION MESSAGE. SEE PARA SIX.

2. POLOFF PRESENTED REF A POINTS TO MFA ASEAN DEPARTMENT EXPERT PHAM MINH THU ON 8 DECEMBER. THU WAS NOT PREPARED TO RESPOND TO POLOFF'S QUESTIONS IN MORE THAN GENERALITIES. HE SAID OVERALL ASEAN AGREES WITH ARF VIEWS ON ENHANCING THE
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POSITION OF THE ARF CHAIR, WITH THE AIM OF STRENGTHENING ASEAN'S ROLE IN THE ARF. ANY ENHANCEMENTS, HOWEVER, MUST BE UNDERTAKEN ACCORDING TO ALREADY-AGREED GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE ARF.

3. ON MOVEMENT TOWARD PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY, THU REPEATED THE WELL-WORN MANTRA THAT PROGRESS MUST MOVE AT A PACE COMFORTABLE TO ALL. IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER, THU NOTED, THAT THE ARF IS, FIRST AND FOREMOST, A FORUM FOR DIALOGUE ON POLITICAL AND SECURITY ISSUES, THE MAIN PURPOSE OF WHICH IS TO BUILD MUTUAL CONFIDENCE. THE MAJORITY OF ARF MEMBERS AGREE THAT THE ARF NEEDS TO MOVE FORWARD, BUT THE UNRESOLVED ISSUE REMAINS HOW TO ACHIEVE PROGRESS WITHOUT UPSETTING MUTUAL CONFIDENCE LEVELS, WHICH THU DESCRIBED AS STILL INADEQUATE.

4. THU OFFERED THAT ALL ARF MEMBERS HAVE BEEN ASKED TO SUBMIT THEIR VIEWS ON THE ROLE OF THE ARF CHAIR, THE REGISTRATION OF EXPERTS AND EMINENT PERSONS, AND STEPS TOWARD PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY TO THE ARF CHAIR BY 15 JANUARY. THU EXPECTED HIS DEPARTMENT TO HAVE MORE CONCRETE COMMENTS TO OFFER IN LATE JANUARY. EMBASSY WILL REVISIT REFTEL ISSUES WITH THE MFA AT THAT TIME.

5. COMMENT: THIS MEETING FOLLOWED A WELL-ESTABLISHED PATTERN IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE VIETNAMESE ON THE ARF. DESPITE VIETNAM'S OSTENSIBLE LEADERSHIP OF THE ARF THIS YEAR, ANY CONSENSUS TO MOVE FORWARD MORE VIGOROUSLY ON ARF OBJECTIVES WILL PROBABLY FIND VIETNAM AT THE TAIL END OF THE QUEUE, BEING DRAGGED. END COMMENT.

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6. ACTION REQUEST: PER REFTELS A AND B ON INVITING VIETNAMESE AND OTHER OFFICIALS TO OBSERVE MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS, EMBASSY WEIGHED IN WHEN DEPARTMENT FIRST RAISED THE IDEA SOME MONTHS AGO. OUR VIEW STILL IS THAT IT COULD POTENTIALLY BE VERY BENEFICIAL, AS LONG AS IT IS OFFERED IN A WAY WHICH DOES NOT MAKE VIETNAM FEEL SINGLED OUT FOR REMEDIAL TREATMENT. IN ORDER TO GET A FIRMER FIX ON WHETHER THE IDEA IS PRACTICAL, EMBASSY WOULD LIKE TO FLOAT THE IDEA IN MORE DETAIL WITH MFA COUNTERPARTS. WE REQUEST POINTS WHICH WE MAY USE WITH THE GVN.

PETERSON

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